

Complaints

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A DDES Customer Information Bulletin



King County Department of Development and Environmental Services
900 Oakesdale Avenue Southwest Renton, Washington 98055-1219

<http://www.metrokc.gov/ddes/>

Frequently Asked Questions

King County DDES has created customer information bulletins to inform the general public about the effect of codes and regulations on their projects. These bulletins are not intended to be complete statements of all laws and rules and should not be used as substitutes for them. If conflicts and questions arise, current codes and regulations are final authority. Because the codes and regulations may be revised or amended at any time, consult King County staff to be sure you understand all requirements before beginning work. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the project meets all requirements of applicable codes and regulations.

Complaints regarding development and/or environmental violations in unincorporated King County

This bulletin explains how to report a citizen concern or a violation of King County Code related to building, zoning, construction, or land development to the Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) or another governmental agency. The Code Enforcement Section of the Building Services Division, or other sections within DDES, will handle any of the violations listed below, provided they fall within this department's jurisdiction.

A written complaint to the appropriate office is required, unless there is an emergency situation. See the section entitled, *How to File a Complaint*, for more information. Note that some of the telephone numbers listed in this bulletin are automated lines and will be answered by machines. When you reach one of these machines, please do not hang up. Leave your request and pertinent information, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Code Enforcement (Building Services Division) complaints

The Code Enforcement Section at 206-296-6680 is responsible for handling the following violations:

- ◆ Building construction (without a permit)
- ◆ Substandard housing
- ◆ Subdivision, short subdivision, or PUD complaints (after development is completed)
- ◆ Illegally placed mobile homes or other factory-assembled structures
- ◆ Open wells and other hazardous excavations
- ◆ Oversized or illegally placed signs
- ◆ Dangerous buildings

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- ◆ Zoning code infractions
- ◆ Complaints relating to shorelines
- ◆ Sensitive areas violations
- ◆ Other land use complaints, hazards, or nuisances (other than noise)
- ◆ Illegal grading, excavating, landfilling, or clearing
- ◆ Livestock infractions; too many animals on property

Note: For complaints regarding flooding or erosion, contact the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Water and Land Resources Division at 206-296-1900.

Other DDES Complaints	
Type of Complaint/Violation	Responsible Section or Division and Telephone Number
Faulty new building construction	Building Inspections (Building Services Division) 206-296-6630
Building with incorrect address	Addressing (Administrative Services Division) 206-296-6628
Fire hazard (such as hazardous materials storage, arson, etc.)	Fire Marshal (Building Services Division) 206-296-6675
Complaints related to development of a new subdivision or commercial site construction and non-utility company right-of-way work	Land Use Inspection Section (Land Use Services Division) 206-296-6642

How to file a complaint

When there is an emergency, call the number listed in the table for the type of complaint you wish to report. If you call after normal working hours or on the weekend, leave a message on the recording and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

In situations other than emergencies, it is preferable that you file your complaint in writing. For written complaints, include the address of the property where the violation has occurred or is occurring, provide directions if the location is hard to find, include the name of the property owner (if known), and describe the problem. Include a sketch of the property, if possible, and your address and telephone number. Sign your written complaint, and mail or fax it to the Code Enforcement Section at the following address, unless otherwise directed by DDES. [If you wish to remain anonymous, you may ask that your name be kept confidential.]

Department of Development and Environmental Services
Code Enforcement Section
900 Oakesdale Avenue SW
Renton, WA 98055-1219
Fax: 206-296-6604

Frequently Asked Questions

If you have any questions that are not answered in this bulletin, or if you need additional information, call the number listed in the table that corresponds to your type of complaint.

What will DDES do about a complaint?

A section staff member will investigate the complaint and, if there is a violation, will direct the violator to comply with the applicable King County Code. If the owner is unwilling or unable to correct the violation, the County has the authority to assess civil penalties against the owner and to correct the violation at the owner's expense.

The time frame in which investigations of complaints may occur varies because of a need for fairness, as well as due process of the law for all involved parties. Priority will be given to addressing the complaint itself. If time allows, DDES will advise the complainant about the outcome of the investigation.

What about complaints other than those listed in the table?

Various County agencies, as well as other state and local agencies, deal with other types of common complaints. These are listed in the following table.

King County Department of Transportation Toll-free 1-800-KC Roads (24 hours)	
Type of Complaint/Violation	Responsible Agency and Telephone Number
Road drainage and maintenance problems, herbicide spraying along County roads, and/or dumping on right-of-way	Roads Maintenance Section 206-296-8100 Fax 206-296-8198
Utility company working on right-of-way	Utility Inspection 206-296-8122 Fax 206-296-8198
Traffic problems (congestion, requests for new signs, signals, pavement markings, or changes to existing signs and signals; sight obstruction)	Roads Traffic and Planning Section 206-296-6596 Fax 206-296-0176
Maintenance of existing signs, signals, and pavement markings, including brushing and signal malfunctions	Traffic Operations Section 206-296-8153 Fax 206-296-8198
Flooding (water drainage, retention, or runoff other than road related), water quality, and erosion problems	DNR Water and Land Resources Division 206-296-1900 Fax 206-296-0192

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Seattle King County Department of Public Health For any of the problems listed in this table, contact the office nearest you.	
Sewage system failures, faulty septic tanks, rodent and vermin infestations, solid waste transfer stations, disposal sites, public health nuisances, and water supply (wells, flooding out of septic systems, etc.)	206-296-4932 Fax 206-296-4919
Noise violations (stationary sources) (Also see Public Safety)	All Districts 206-296-4632 Toll-free 1-800-325-6165

King County Department of Public Safety For any calls to 911, inform the dispatcher that you are making a non-emergency call.	
Public disturbances (noise in neighborhood, vandalism, etc.) (Also see Public Health)	King County Police 911
Abandoned cars and parking problems on County right-of-way	King County Police 911 206-205-0969

King County Department of Executive Administration	
Stray dogs, cats, and barking dogs	Animal Control Section 206-296-7387

King County Office of Open Space	
Agricultural restrictive covenant code violations	206-296-7800

King County Ombudsman—Office of Citizen Complaints	
Citizen complaints about County agencies, actions or interactions of County governmental processes, and violations of Code of Ethics	206-296-3452 Fax 206-296-0948

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Other County Offices	
General Information	206-296-0100 Toll free 1-800-325-6165 Fax 206-296-0198

Washington State Department of Labor and Industries	
Construction work hours, sanitation problems (portable toilets, etc.), and other worker safety and health problems	206-281-5470

Washington State Department of Transportation	
Traffic, road, or flooding problems on state designated highways	206-440-4697

Washington State Department of Ecology	
Toxic spills	425-649-7000

Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency	
Air quality issues (smoke, odors, etc.) For outdoor burning such as land clearing or yard waste, call your local fire department	206-343-8800
Information on temporary bans on fires in wood stoves, fireplaces, elsewhere (you will reach a recorded message)	1-800-595-4341

Metro	
Hazardous waste complaints	206-689-3050
Water pollution complaints	206-684-1280

Frequently Asked Questions

Other bulletins and telephone numbers that may be helpful

Bulletin 1	Building and Development Permit Telephone Numbers
Bulletin 6	Working with Contractors
Bulletin 8	Commercial and Multi-family Building Permits
Bulletin 9	Obtaining a Residential Building Permit
Bulletin 10	Residential Building on or Near Waterfront: Additional Requirements
Bulletin 12	Residential Building Permit Process
Bulletin 16	Shoreline Erosion Control
Bulletin 21	Sensitive Areas Review
Bulletin 25	Short Subdivisions
Bulletin 26	The SEPA Process
Bulletin 27	Residential Energy Codes
Bulletin 28	Grading Permits
Bulletin 37	Water Problems

206-296-6600	DDES Permit Center
206-296-6797	DDES Permit Application Appointment Line
206-296-6696	DDES Records Center



King County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you require an accommodation to attend a meeting (two weeks notice) or require this information in Braille, audiocassette, or large print, please call 206-296-6693 or TDD 206-296-7217.